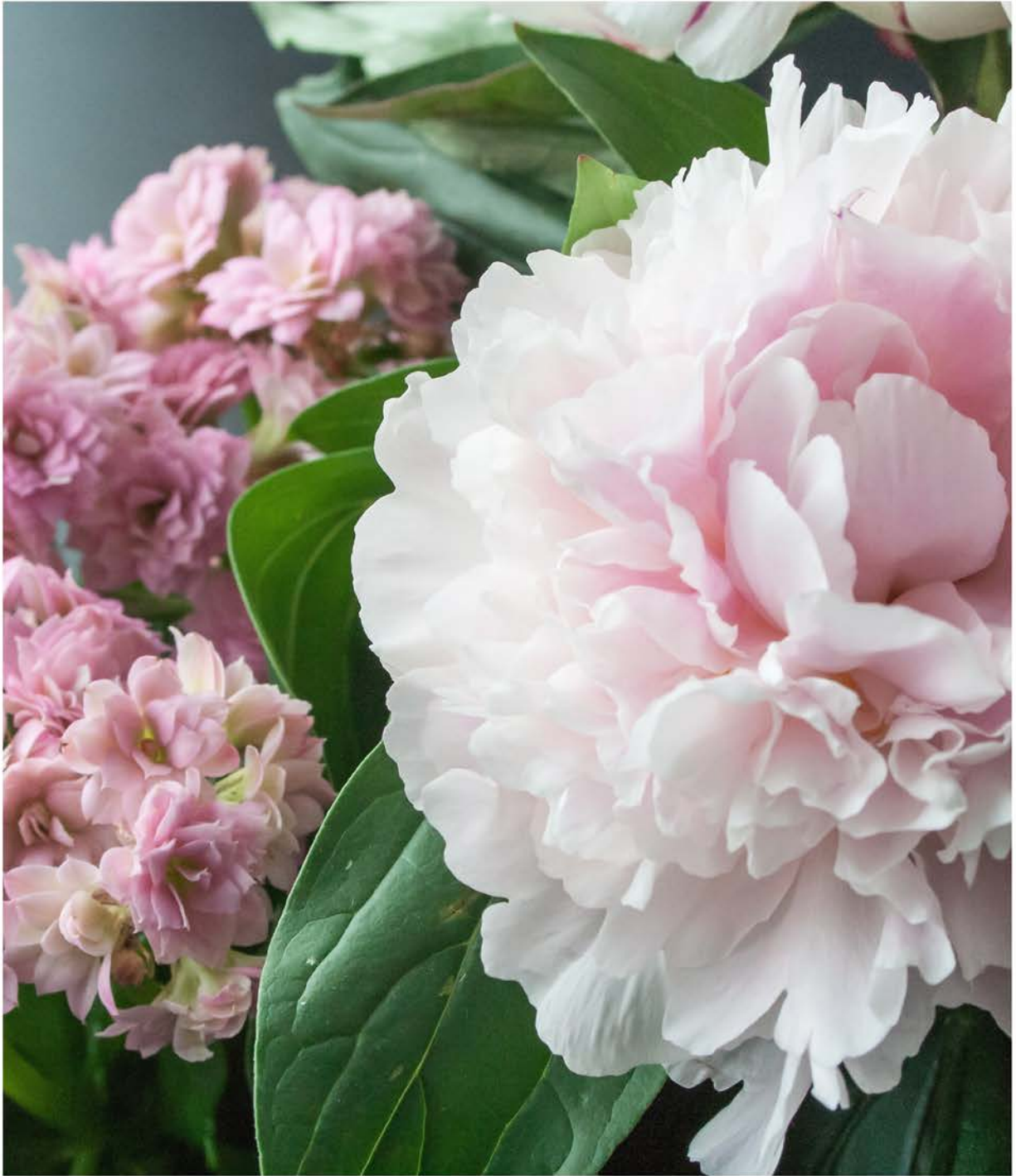
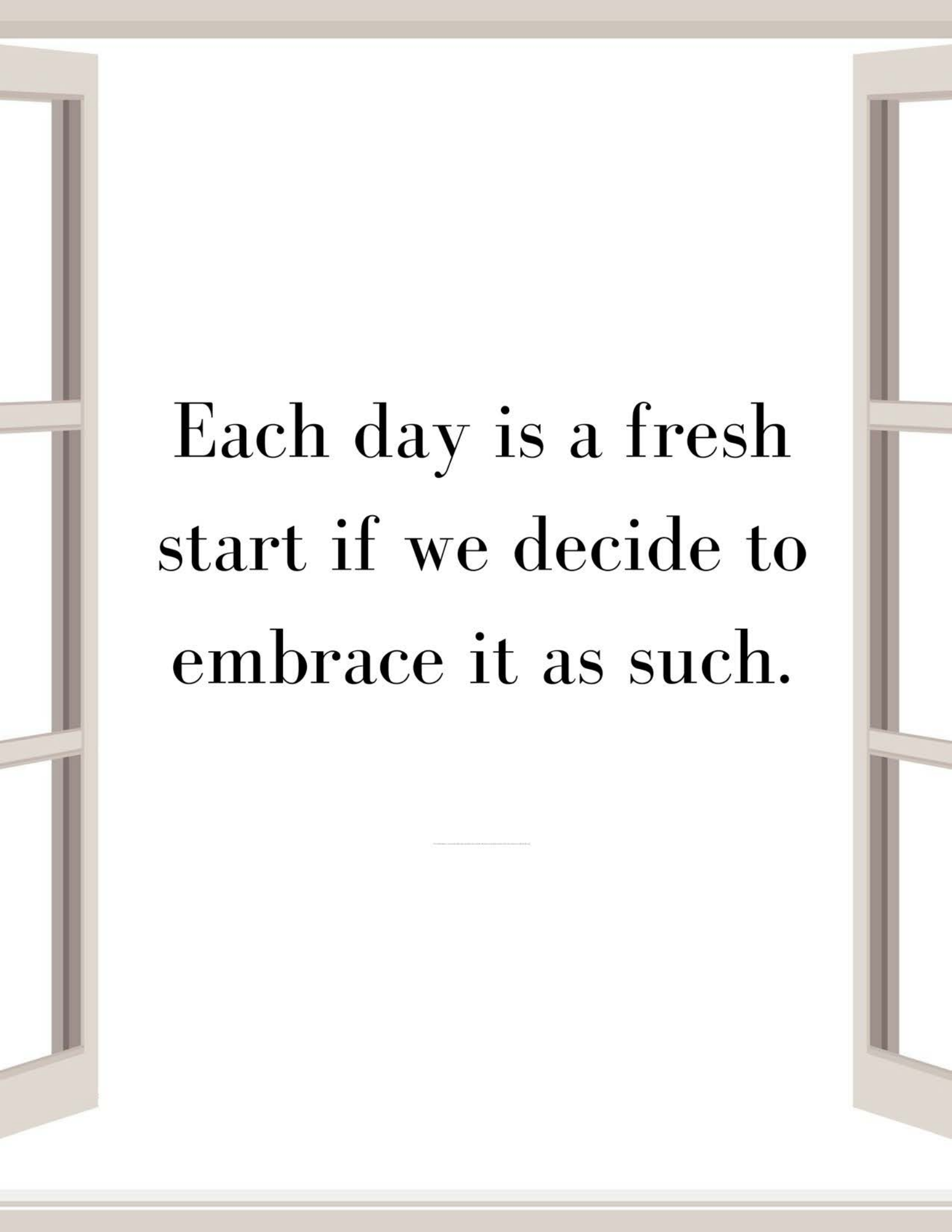




The Modern Creative  
Woman Publishing Co.



The Modern Creative Woman  
**My Fresh Start**



Each day is a fresh  
start if we decide to  
embrace it as such.

---

# Presence - Mindset - Purpose

1

## **Presence**

Your presence includes getting out of your mind and getting into your life, making contact with the present moment and seeing yourself as the "context" for your life experiences. Your internal presence can be whatever you decide it to be in each moment of your life.

2

## **Mindset**

Your mindset includes acceptance of what you are currently thinking and feeling as well as the circumstances you are facing. Acceptance of what currently exists is necessary before attempting to make any changes. Mindset also includes forging a new working relationship with your thoughts and practicing conscious & creative thinking.

3

## **Purpose**

Your purpose includes both your personal values and the action steps you take in alignment with your values. It is through your purpose that you engage with your life, choose what is most important, and make committed actions to demonstrate your values to yourself and others.

# PRESENCE

## **Present Moment Awareness & Yourself as Context**

**Presence** - your ability to make contact with the present moment, separate from your thoughts and feelings about it. This means observing what is happening outside of you as well as observing your thoughts and feelings in the present moment.

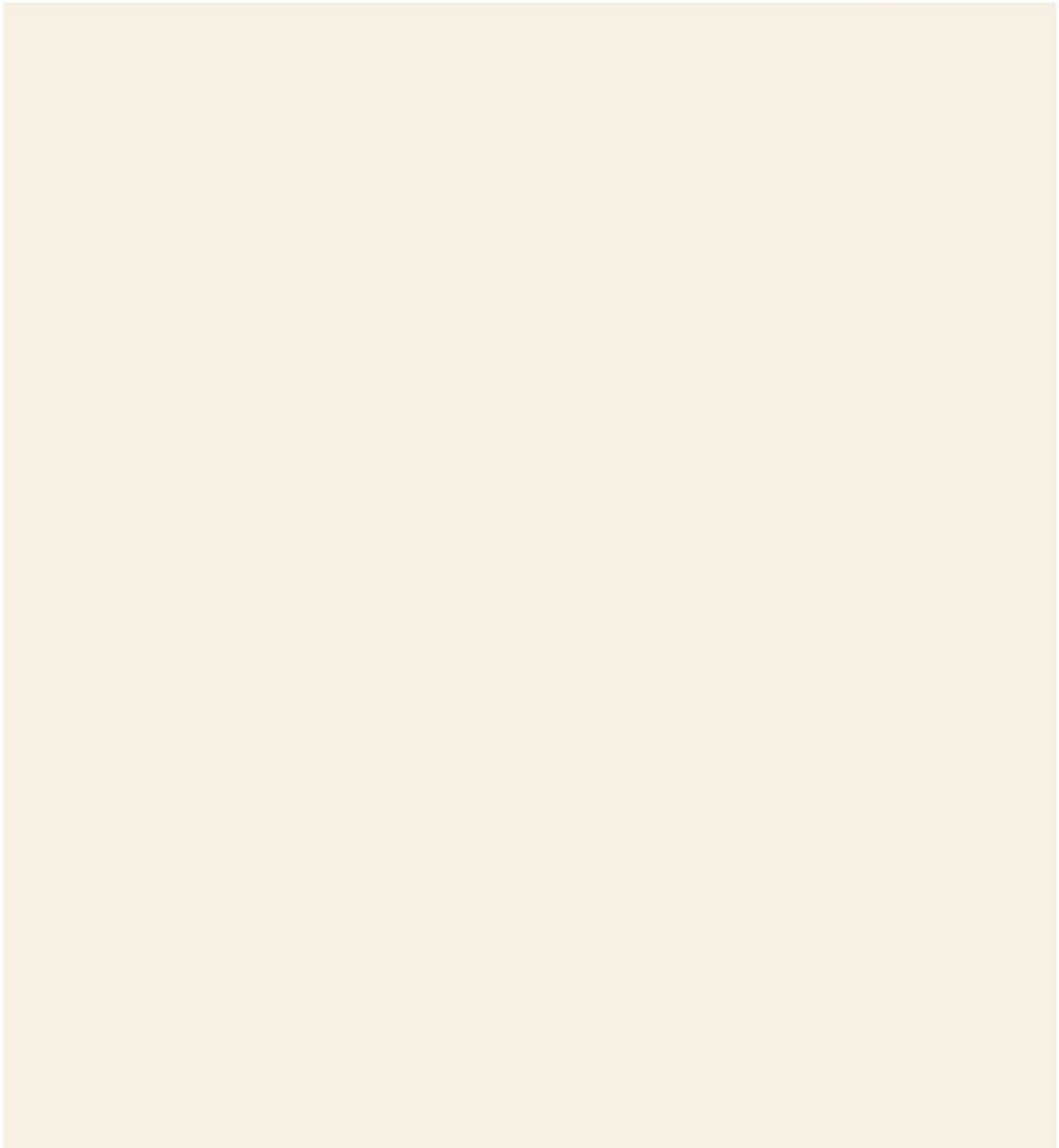
**Self as Context** - Seeing yourself as the context for your life means you are the anchor. Whatever happens inside of you (thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations) as well as whatever happens outside of you (people, places, circumstances) is separate from your experience as a human being. You might think of your "context" as your spirit, your core self, your essence. In other words, you as the context is the view of yourself as the person experiencing your life. For example: you are the journal on which your story is written. Rather than being the story itself, you are able to truthfully see yourself as the journal on which the story is written. Another example: You are the canvas on which you create the painting of your life. Instead of being the paint, you accurately see yourself as the canvas.

Remember, your presence includes getting out of your mind and getting into your life, making contact with the present moment and seeing yourself as the context for your life experiences. Your internal presence can be whatever you decide it to be in each moment of your life.



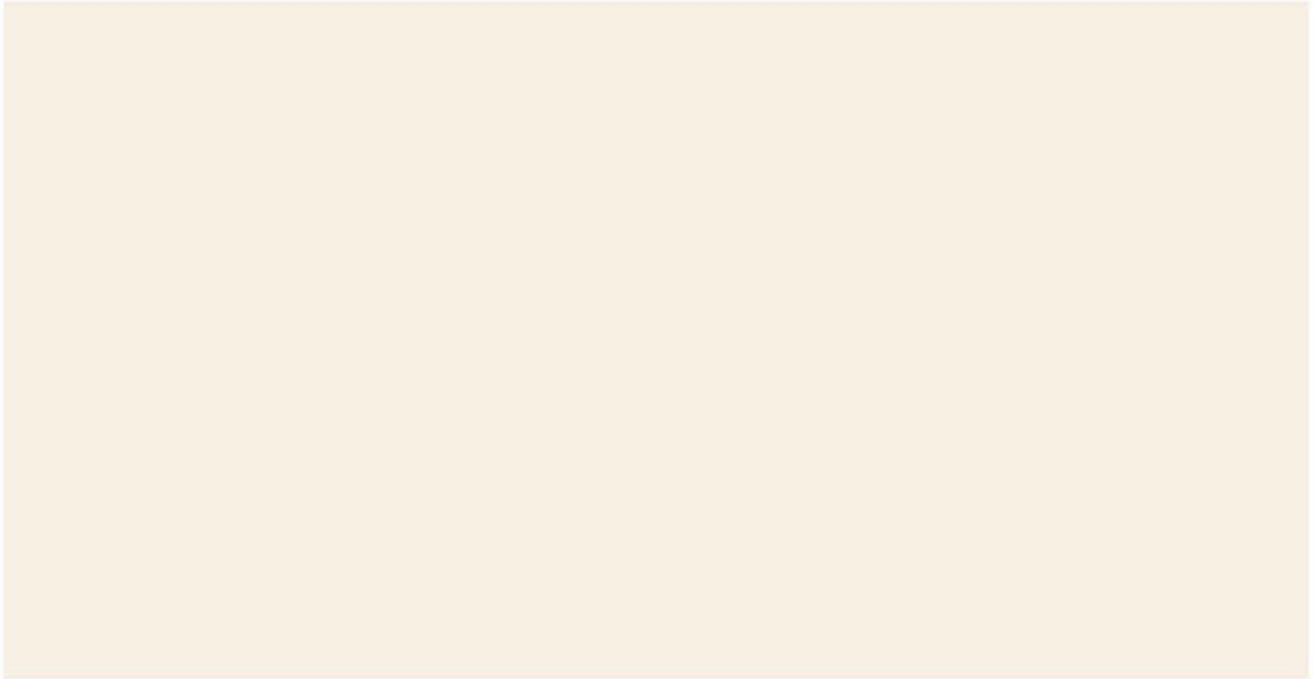
# INTENTION

What is your intention for this workshop? What area of your life will you be launching a fresh start? For example: health, art making, business, romance, creativity, money, spirituality, family commitments, etc.

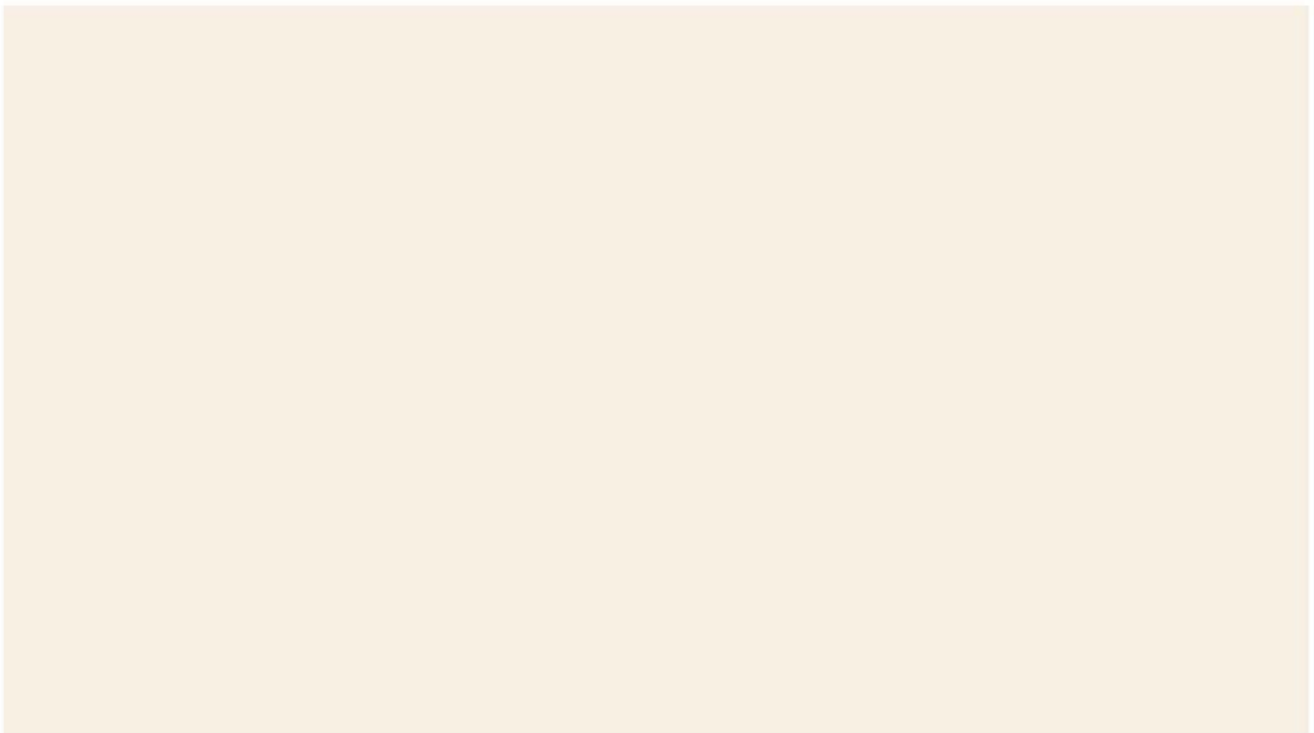


# Imaging A Fresh Start

Set your timer for 2 minutes, close your eyes and visualize your favorite time of year. Write down the details of your visualization below. Each season brings a fresh start...in what ways is the season you described giving the the earth and you a fresh start?



Create an image below to reflect the fresh starts of your favorite season. It can be a drawing of the season or the feeling you get using lines, shapes and colors. Give your art work a title.



# What Matters Most

Make a list of what is most important for you this month or in your life. These are the values, actions, relationships, and choices that are the absolute most important to you. For example, a relationship/friendship, spirituality, community, work, education, health, creativity, fun, etc.

Put a star next to three that are non-negotiable. Pick ONE you want to focus on for the next four months. Obviously all are important, just identify one for class. Continue to the next page to complete this exercise.

01

02

03

04

05

06

07

08

09

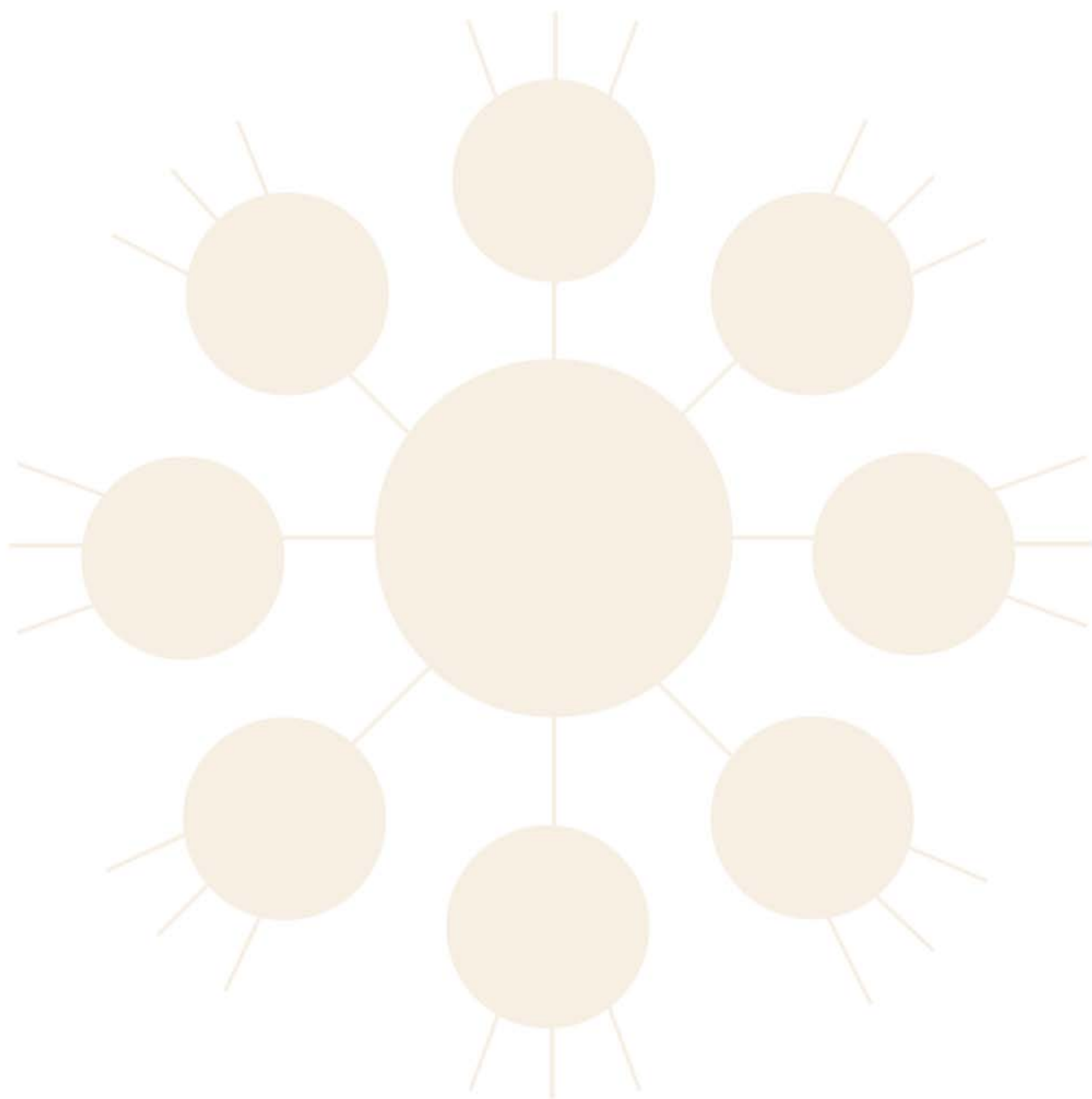
# Why This Matters to Me

Write down why this one value from the previous page matters to you and why you are choosing to work on it right now. Include what you think and feel about it. Keep asking yourself the following question until you have gotten to the heart of the matter. **“Why does this matter to me?”** You will know you found the heart of the matter when you feel a tingle of emotion, feel confident that is your why, you ran out of anything else to write, or have some tears of relief/joy/purpose. Avoid delaying or thinking about it later - just decide at the end of your writing that this is your Modern Creative Why.



# Connecting My Modern Creative Why

Write your Modern Creative Why in the middle of the circle. Add your other values and priorities around the circle to see how your “Why” is related to many areas of your life. For example, if your main value is creativity you can link that to all areas of your life. Creativity benefits your relationships, parenting, friendships, work, health, spirituality, community, etc. See the big picture?



# REFLECTION

Reflect on your values and how they are interconnected in your life. Imagine a lovely hanging mobile with different colors and shapes. As you touch one part of it, the whole mobile moves gracefully, bobbing up and down before settling back into stillness. Each piece of the mobile represents aspects of your life. Touching one represents you acting on all your values.

**Answer these questions:** How do you want to approach your values knowing they are all interconnected? What does it feel like to imagine your Modern Creative Why informing all aspects of your life?



# MINDSET

## **Acceptance & Relationship to Your Thoughts**

**Acceptance** -Acceptance is your ability to see things for what they are. You understand your thoughts as "just thoughts" instead of perceiving your thoughts as "true" or facts. Acceptance is a core concept in changing your self-talk and beliefs about yourself. For example, if you have a negative thought about yourself, it is only a thought. You might be able to find piles of evidence to support your thought, yet a thought is just a thought. It is your brain firing - that is all. Acceptance also helps us be better in relationships by not taking things personally. For example, if someone says something to us, we can allow it to be what it is - just a comment.

Acceptance means we avoid distorting the comment into something negative or personal. This one change in your life can completely transform your relationship with your significant other, friends, family and coworkers.

**Relationship to your Thoughts** - Changing your relationship to thoughts frees you from negative self-talk and low self-esteem. Then you can transform your behaviors for health, recovery, and happiness. Your thoughts stem from your brain - not from your essence, spirit or core self. Thoughts are merely a product of your brain. Make your thoughts work for you instead of being swayed by negative thoughts. Start by observing; say "That is just a thought" each time you notice a thought.

Remember, your mindset includes acceptance of what you are currently thinking and feeling as well as the circumstances you are facing. Acceptance is necessary before attempting to make any changes. Mindset also includes forging a new working relationship with your thoughts and practicing conscious & creative thinking.

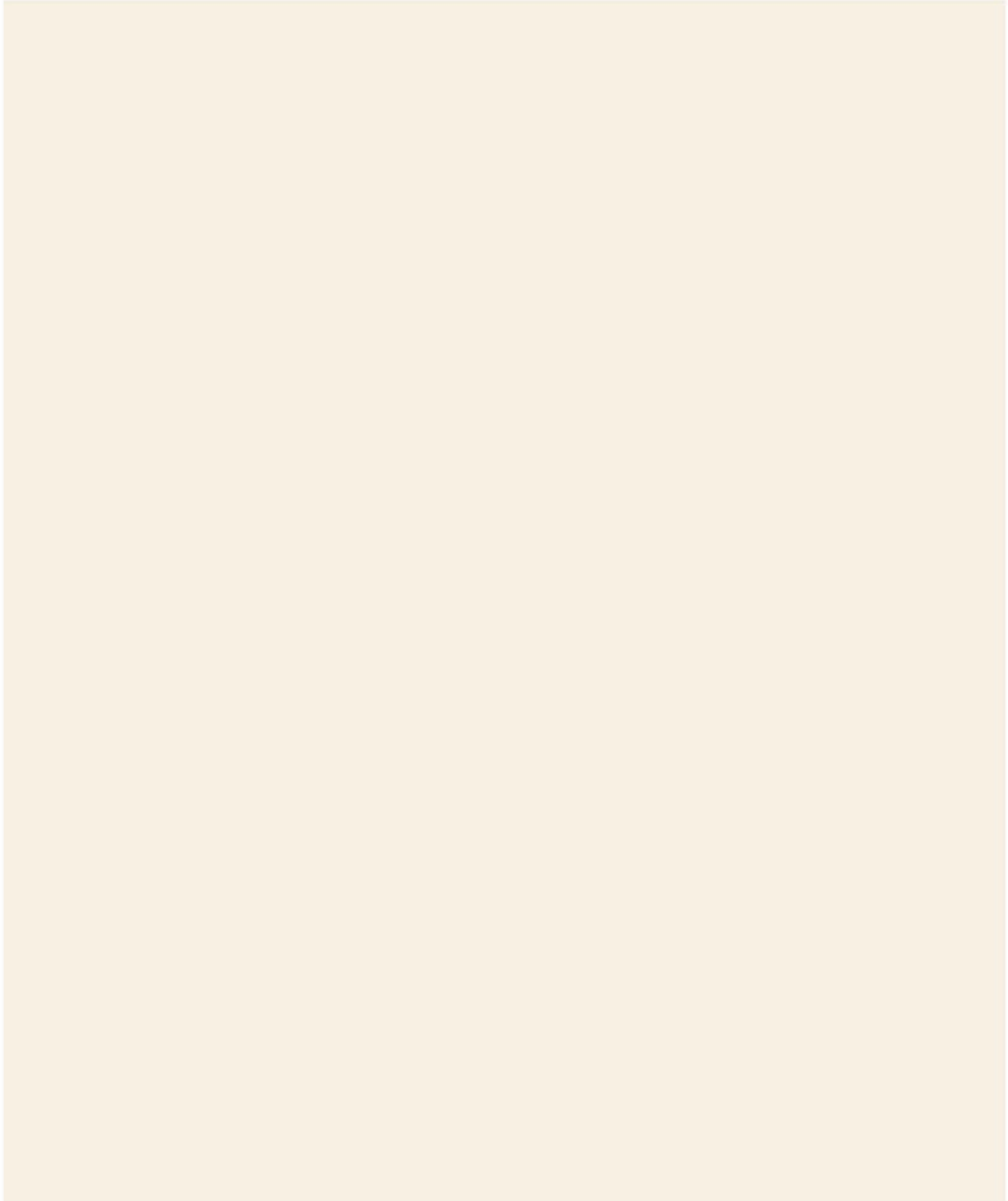


**Your  
Modern Creative Why is  
your purpose in life.**

**Trusting your Modern  
Creative Why gives you  
guidance in your  
choices, reactions, and  
decisions.**

# My Modern Creative Why

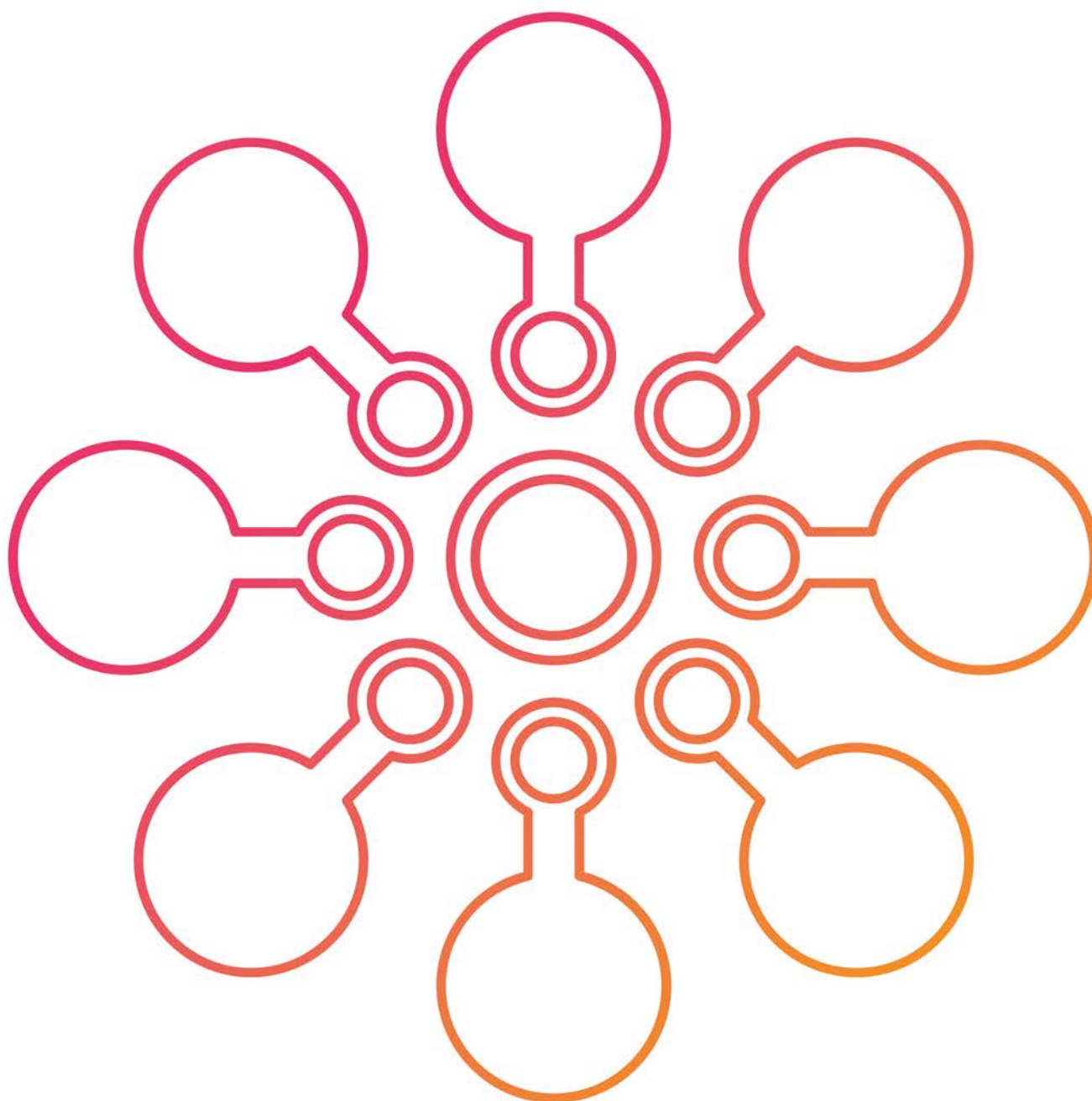
Revisit your why. Write your why below. Make it big, bold and creative. Give it the loving, creative treatment it deserves.





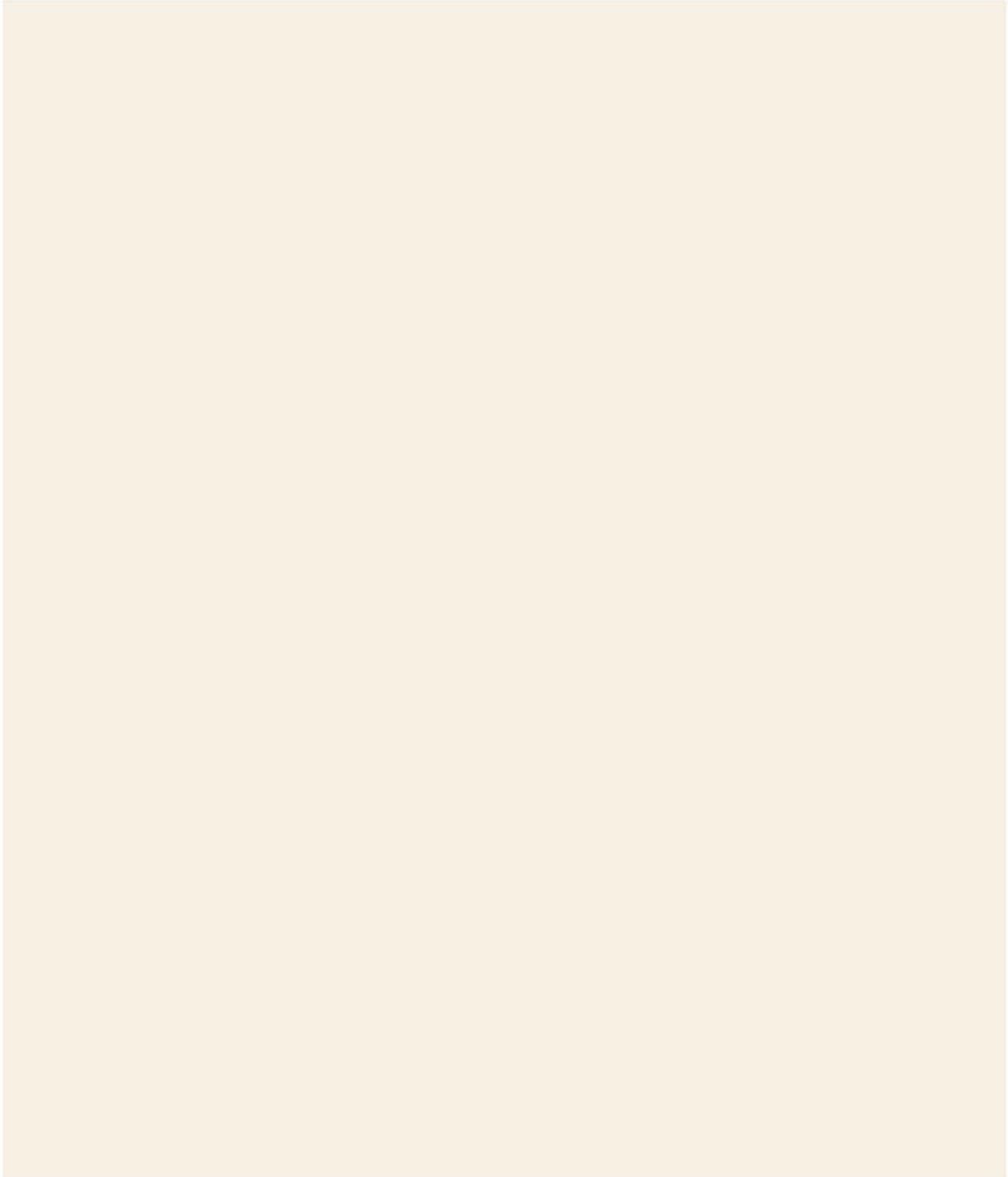
## Mind Map of My Modern Creative Why

In the middle of the mind map, write your Modern Creative Why. In the surrounding boxes, write and draw whatever comes to mind as you free associate to your “Why.” Work quickly and be spontaneous. See what emerges and don’t judge as you write and draw whatever comes to mind. You may have associations that you like and ones that you dislike. All are welcome. You can choose to carry forward whatever thoughts you choose and discard the rest. They are your thoughts after all!



# The Big Picture

Reflect on your big picture mind map. Consider how your “Why” fits into each area of your life.  
**Answer these questions:** How does your Modern Creative Woman related to what you are most excited about? What you are here to accomplish? What unique values and desires do you possess?

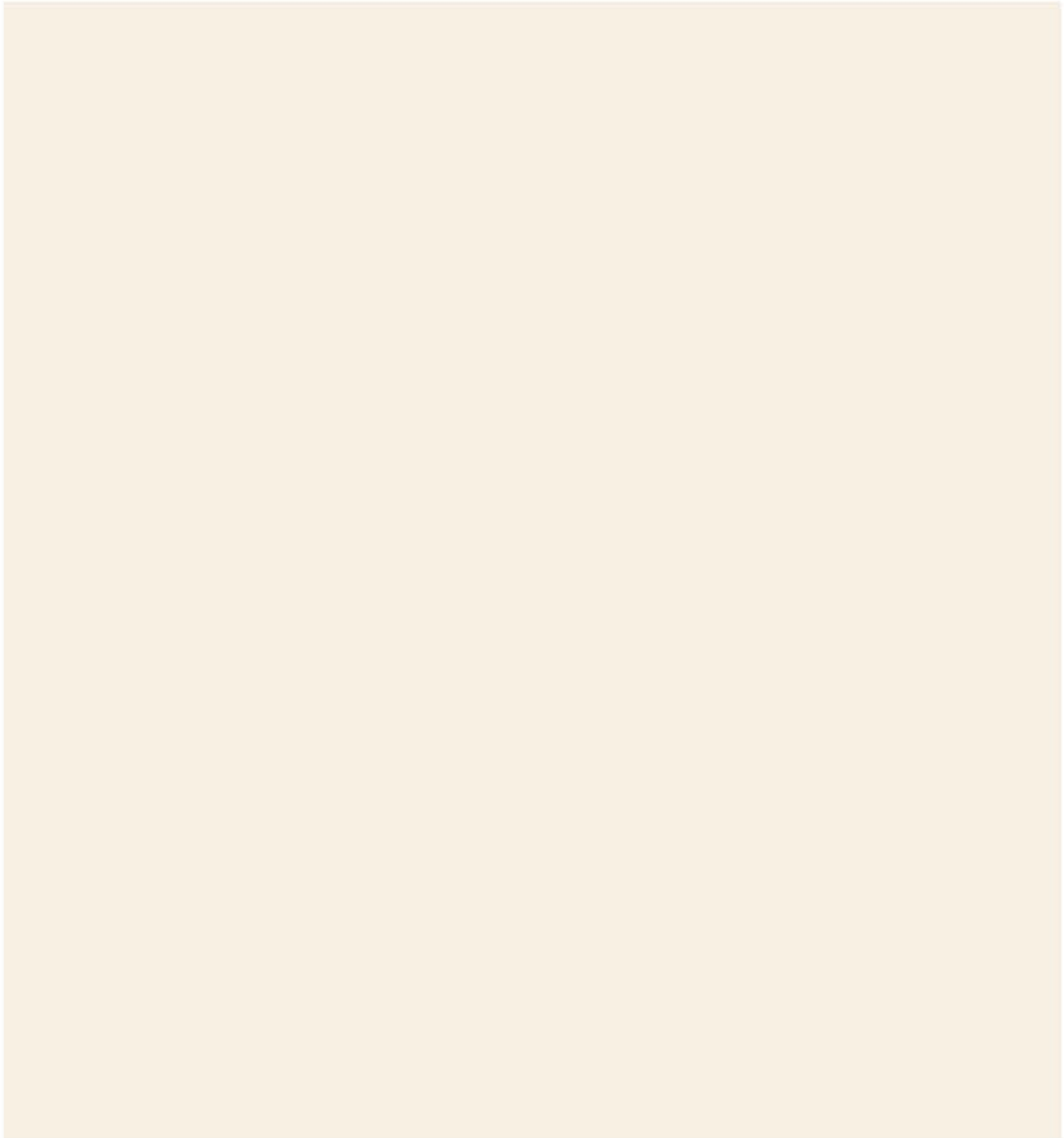


# Defusing from Self-limiting Thoughts

What are the old fears you have about living your values? That you will be too much, not enough, don't deserve it, can't possibly change, are too young/old, people won't like you, don't have enough experience, aren't good enough, failed in the past, don't want to be seen, don't want to inconvenience anyone, want to stay in the background? Write down all your fears and limiting thoughts below. Don't stop here - be sure to go onto the next page immediately after you complete this page to defuse form these thoughts.

# Relating to My Self Limiting Thoughts

Do you see how self-limiting thoughts keep you from acting on your values and desires? Remember, thoughts are not facts, they are a biological process designed to keep you safe. They are not designed or capable of deciding what you are willing to do with your life. Thoughts are something you can consider, but they can't be the primary factor in how you live your values. For example, if you have a thought that you are dumb, the thought does not make it true. Take a deep breath, refer back to your "Why" mind map and write the truths of the now. **Answer this Question:** What is really true about your values, the big picture and how you want to be?



# REFLECTION

Reflect on what you noticed this week in your thoughts and mindset about defining your Modern Creative Why. What will you remember about this week? Avoid judging yourself for what you did or did not do.





# PURPOSE

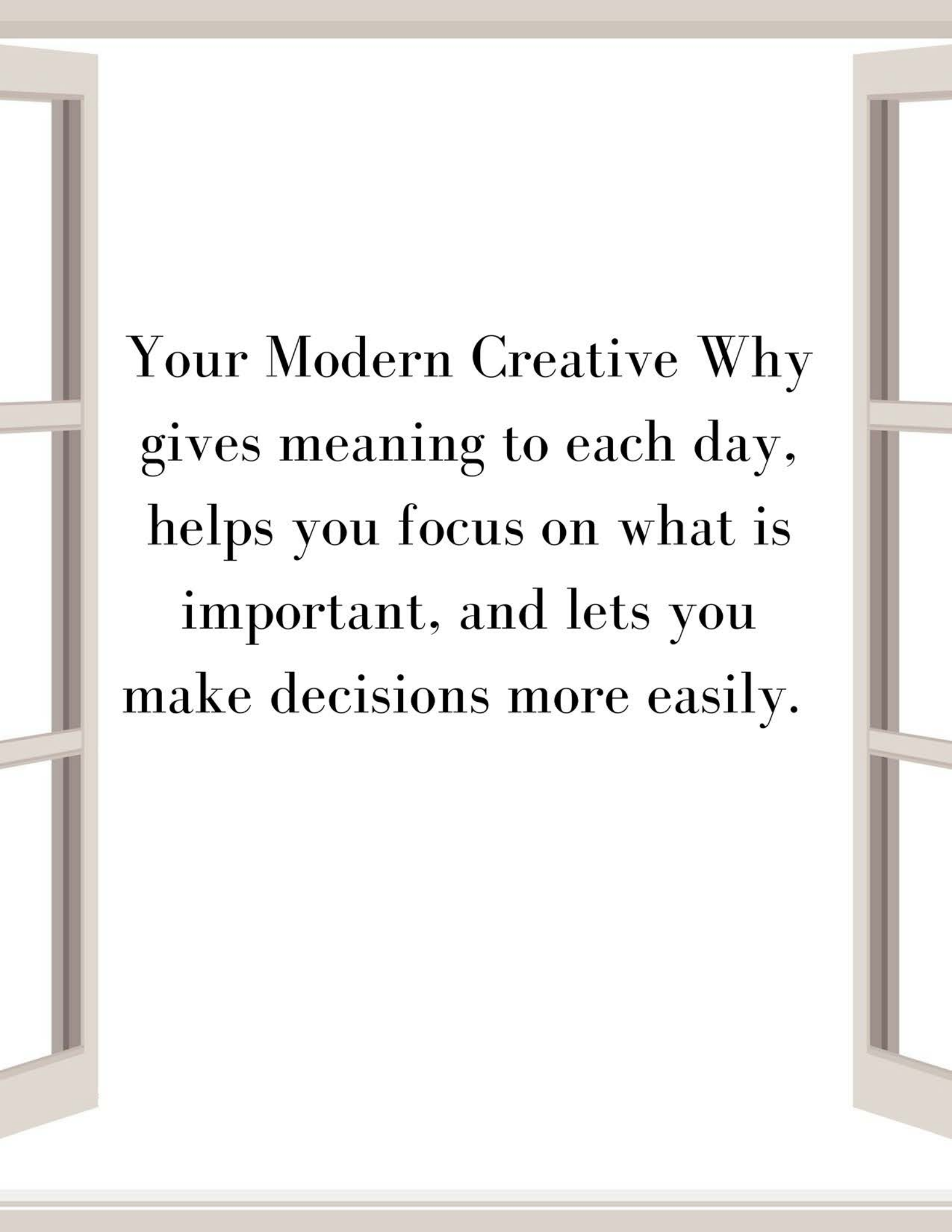
## Your Values & Committed Actions

Your purpose includes both your personal values and the action steps you take in alignment with your values. It is through your purpose that you engage with your life, choose what is most important, and make committed actions to demonstrate your values to yourself and others.

**Purpose** - your chosen presence and actions in the world. Your purpose is something you decide based on what you enjoy, have an interest in pursuing, and have an ability/aptitude for doing.

**Values** - what you decide is most important to you. You have values in many areas such as, health, intimate partner relationship, education, family, friendship, parenting, sports, spirituality, work/vocation, community, creativity, service, school, personal development, hobbies, etc. Your values are what YOU want to bring to each area and has nothing to do with what others are doing or even if they like what you are doing. For example you might value honesty in work. When you come across someone being dishonest at work, your values help you commit to acting honestly, even if you feel resentful, angry or tempted to become dishonest when you work with a dishonest person.

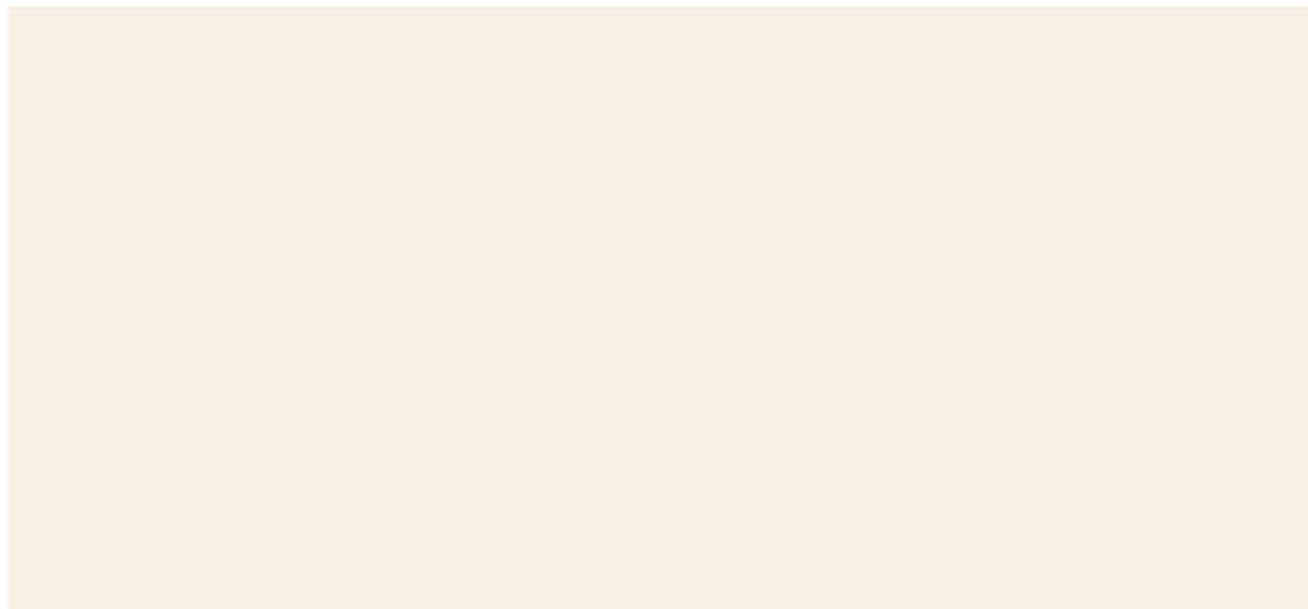
**Committed Actions** - how you demonstrate your values through your actions. Your actions directly reflect your values. Committed action is how you show your values to yourself and the world. Notice this is action, not thoughts or beliefs. If you live your values, they will show in your behavior. For example, if you truly believe in your health, then your behavior will show it through healthy food choices, exercise, managing your mind, learning what you need to know, practicing body care, and investing time and money in your health. If you only think or talk about your health, then it is a wish, instead of a value and committed action.



Your Modern Creative Why  
gives meaning to each day,  
helps you focus on what is  
important, and lets you  
make decisions more easily.

# My Modern Creative Why

Revisit your why. Do you have it memorized yet? Has it evolved or deepened in the last week? Do you need to uplift and elevate any of the language? Write your “Why” below, making any adjustments you like to make it more clear, aspirational, and exciting to you.



Boil your Modern Creative Why down to one word or phrase to help you remember quickly and easily. Write the word inside the middle of the circle. Create a simple design inside the circle to reflect your feelings and energy about your “Why”. Use your intuition and be spontaneous. Write down three words to describe your design and give it a title.



# 3 Degrees of Connection

This next section helps you visualize more clearly how your Modern Creative Why is linked to the other important areas of your life. Look back to the list you created in week one, where you listed out all the important areas of your life. This section asks you to make a stronger connection between your “Why” and three other areas that are important to you. Think of this as a semi-structured mind map. You have an example on the next page followed by two blank maps.

**Why** - Put your Modern Creative Why in the top circle.

**Supporting Beliefs** - Add two beliefs that support your Why. These might be experiences that helped you see your purpose clearly, ideas, concepts that are important to you, feelings related to your “Why” or anything else that comes to mind.

**Related Values** - Select three related values you want to write about. Remember value domains areas that you find important to you. Values are directions, not goals. For example: family, parenting, romantic relationships, health, education, spirituality, community, creativity, work/vocation, friendships, home, etc. For Example: Your parenting value might include: “being a loving and supportive parent.” Your romantic partner value might include: “being a loving, loyal and compassionate partner.” Remember, your value statements are how *you* want to be in each area (rather than what you want from the situation or another person).

**Supporting Thoughts** - Add two thoughts that support this value. Craft these thoughts as aspirational and uplifting. Elevate them as much as possible to give yourself powerful thoughts which you can use throughout the next four months.

**Summary** - Review your semi-structured mind map and craft a statement that helps you see how powerful these links between your values really are. Work on the summary until you feel it reflects the truth of the now in how you want to live your purpose.

**Note** - The next page is a sample for you to review and the following are two blank mind maps for you to complete your 3 Degrees of Connection. Use the first one as a draft and fill in the second as a clean copy for you to hang up where you can see it everyday.



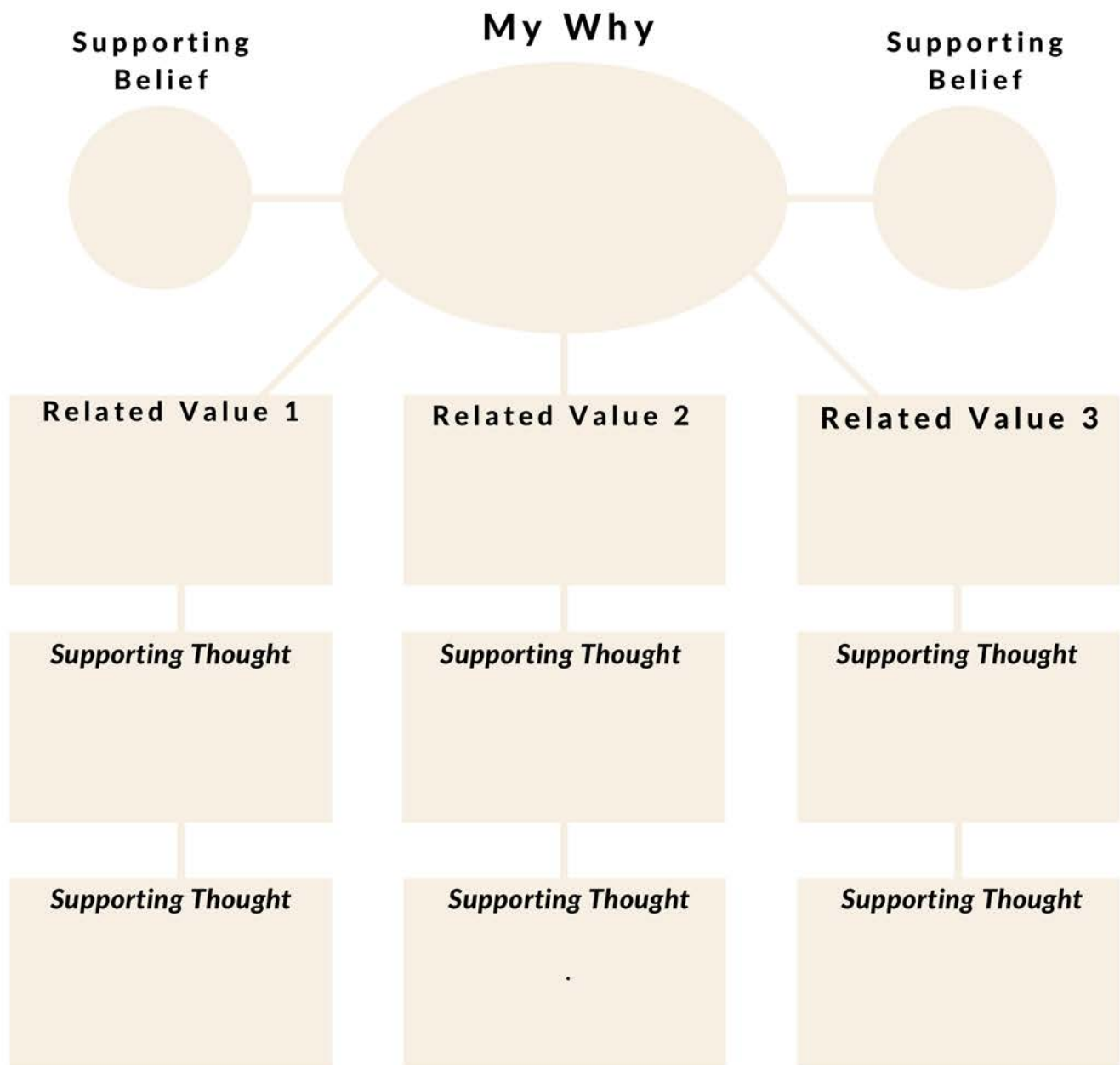
# 3 Degrees of Connection



## SUMMARY

*I see how all my other values are intertwined with my value of creativity and being of service to women. My health allows me to have the energy and zest to bring my ideas to life. My own creative expressions and creative thinking allow me to bring unique programs to the Modern Creative Woman. My work time is directly related to my purpose of sharing creativity.*

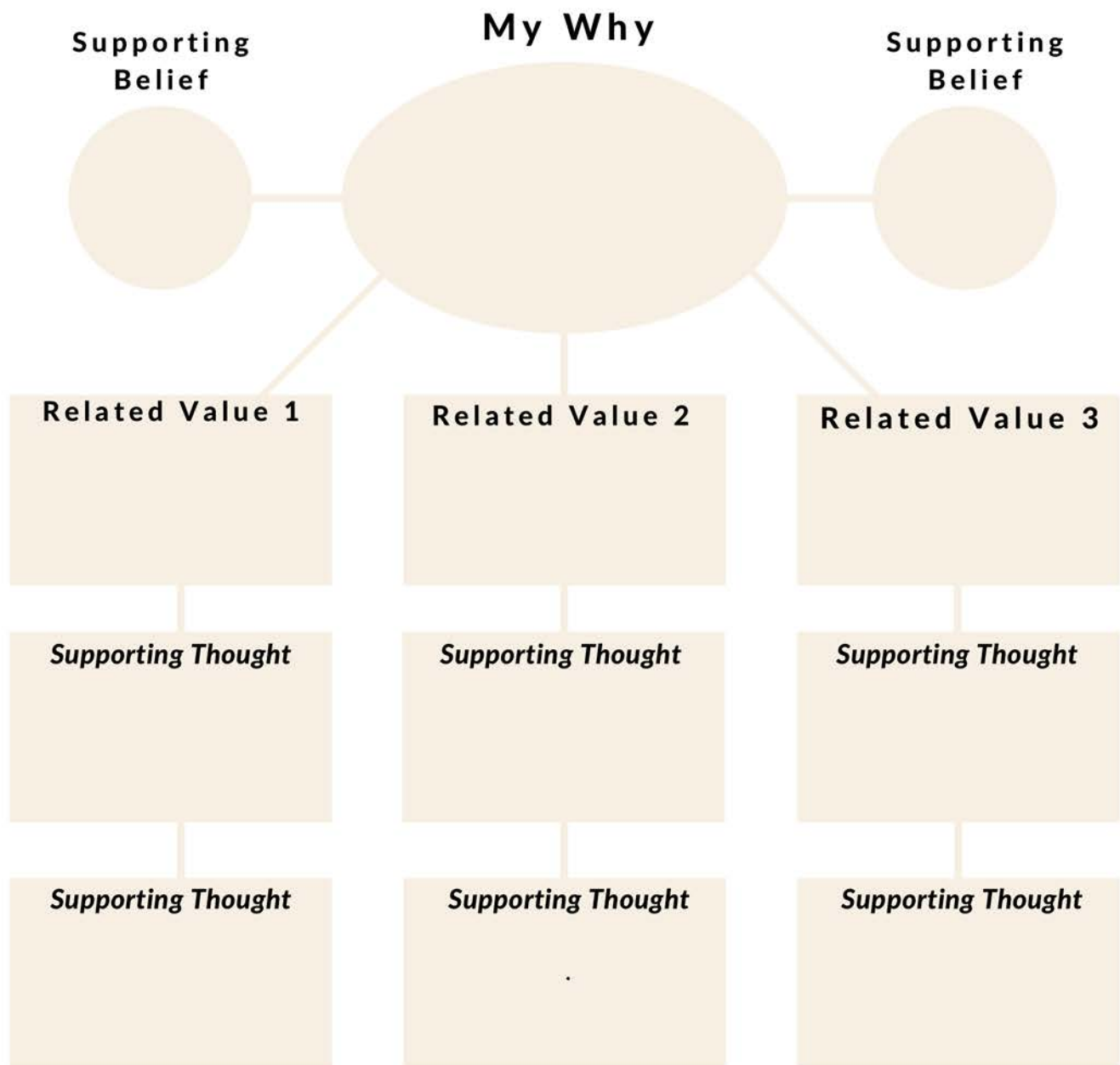
# 3 Degrees of Connection



## SUMMARY



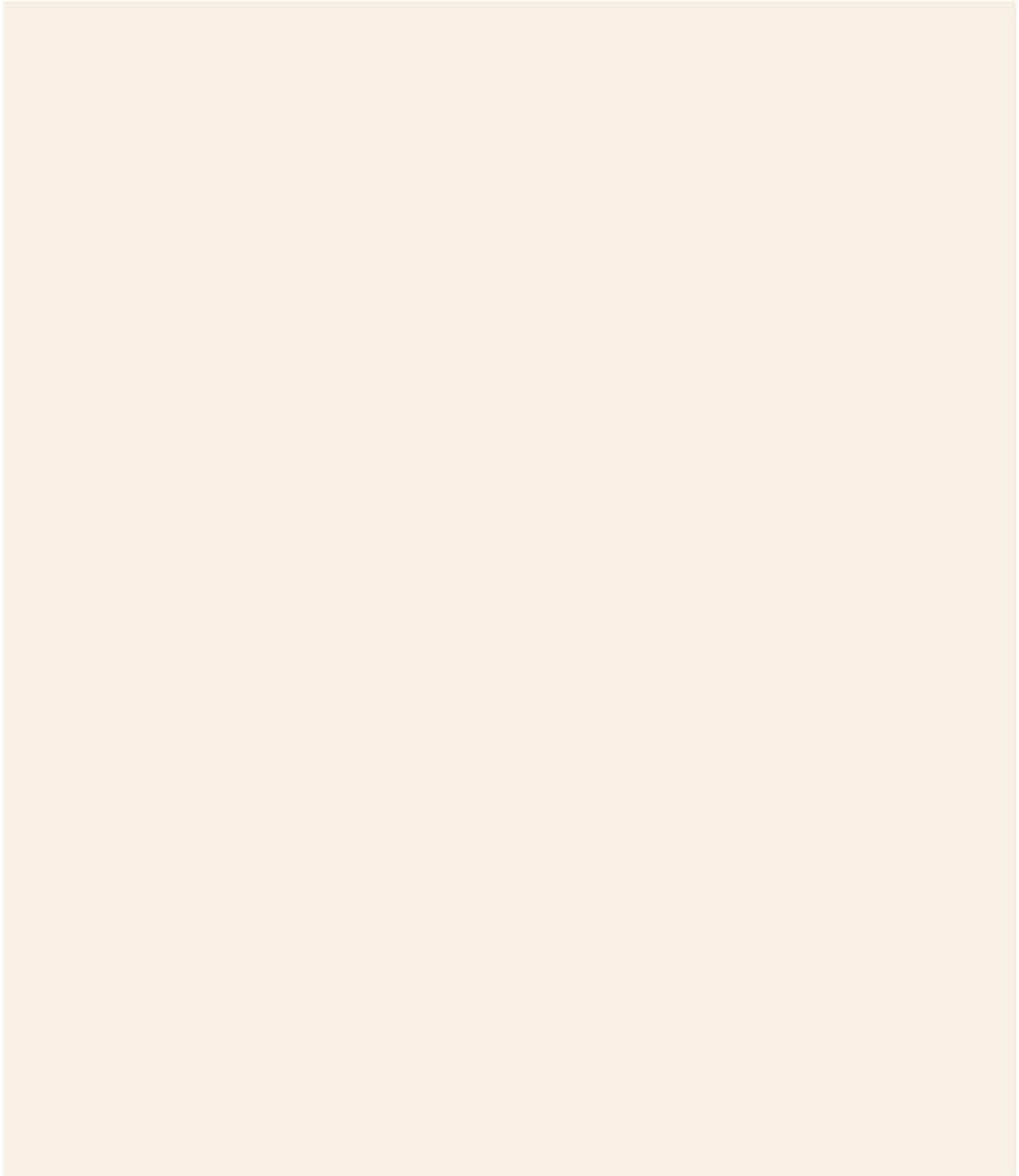
# 3 Degrees of Connection



## SUMMARY

# My Modern Creative Why

Write your Modern Creative Why word phrase in large cursive letters. Turn the paper upside down and write it again, right next to and touching the other letters. This makes one unified design of the word. Use colored pencils to fill in the image and make it a lovely picture. Choose colors that relate to your Why and the feeling you want to have from living your Modern Creative Why.



# Gratitude

Identify three aspects of yourself that you are grateful for right now. Describe the value that each of these bring to your life. For example, "I am grateful for my curiosity...I am interested in the world and the people I talk to each day. My curiosity helps me avoid assumptions in my relationships and in my work. My curiosity allows me to engage and have fun with my son."

How do these qualities you are grateful for connect with your Modern Creative Why and how do they help you achieve your vision for the life you want?

# My Modern Creative Plan

## Instructions

This next section helps you prepare for the next four months with an eye on specific change you will **begin** working on and measuring in the fourth month. Between now and then, just focus on preparing for and practicing your desired changes without making specific progress towards it. You may make progress on your Modern Creative Goal, but that is not the point of the next three months.

Perhaps your Modern Creative Why is to be loving to your family, contribute to a cause, be more vulnerable with others, be more self expressive or creative.

Your goals might be to get a new job, write a specific portion of your book, volunteer, join a choir, increase your monthly income by a certain amount, launch a program, or complete a course certification. These would be goals you set that you will start working on in a few months. In the mean time, you will practice and conduct experiments that move you towards your goal.

But before you rush off to make external changes towards this goal, it is essential for you to reflect on how the goal links to your why and make a plan. Remember, you will be practicing and preparing for your goal without any expectation to start external change.

**My Modern Creative Why** - Put your Modern Creative “Why” in section I. This is to remind you of your values and purpose.

**My Modern Creative Goal** - Write your Modern Creative Goal here. This is a big goal. It might be a little bigger than other goals you attempted before. It might be a goal you have tried before but did not yet complete. It could be a brand new goal to fit your new Modern, Creative self. If you are uncertain about your goal and dream, write something down. You can then take only 24 hours to decide. You can decide to stay with this goal or go to another. After that, DO NOT CHANGE YOUR MIND. You do not have an extra 24 hours. This is just as much an exercise in being decisive as it is about your goal.

**Month 1, 2 and 3** - Identify ways that you will practice the goal. You will practice being a woman who has already accomplished her goal and is living her purpose through little experiments. You can place your experiments in logical order according to steps necessary (get a business license comes before build a website). If there is no obvious order, put your experiments in order of difficulty with the easiest in month 1.

See the next page for an example of my Modern Creative Why. There are two worksheets for you - 1st a working draft and 2nd a final version to hang up and look at every day.

# My Modern Creative Plan



## Why

My Modern Creative Why is to help make the world a better place for all women through creativity & creative thinking.

## Specific Goal to start in Month IV

My Modern Creative goal is to reach 1000 women in the MCW membership.

## Month III

Launch paid ads on three platforms.

## Month II

Talk to 100 more women about The MCW.  
Participate in mastermind.

## Month I

Talk to 100 women I know about The MCW for ideas and inspiration.

# My Modern Creative Plan

Rough draft and notes



Why

Why I want to be a modern creative woman is because I want to be able to express myself and my ideas in a way that is unique and creative. I want to be able to use my creativity to solve problems and make things better. I want to be able to use my creativity to make a difference in the world.

Specific Goal to start in Month IV

I want to start a business that is focused on creating modern creative products. I want to start a business that is focused on creating modern creative products that are both functional and beautiful. I want to start a business that is focused on creating modern creative products that are both functional and beautiful.

Month III

I want to start a business that is focused on creating modern creative products. I want to start a business that is focused on creating modern creative products that are both functional and beautiful. I want to start a business that is focused on creating modern creative products that are both functional and beautiful.

Month II

I want to start a business that is focused on creating modern creative products. I want to start a business that is focused on creating modern creative products that are both functional and beautiful. I want to start a business that is focused on creating modern creative products that are both functional and beautiful.

Month III

I want to start a business that is focused on creating modern creative products. I want to start a business that is focused on creating modern creative products that are both functional and beautiful. I want to start a business that is focused on creating modern creative products that are both functional and beautiful.



# My Modern Creative Plan



Why

Why I want to start my business is because I have a passion for it and I want to make a difference in the world. I want to help people and I want to be successful.

Specific Goal to start in Month IV

I want to start my business in Month IV and I want to have a specific goal to start in Month IV. I want to have a specific goal to start in Month IV and I want to have a specific goal to start in Month IV.

Month III

I want to start my business in Month III and I want to have a specific goal to start in Month III. I want to have a specific goal to start in Month III and I want to have a specific goal to start in Month III.

Month II

I want to start my business in Month II and I want to have a specific goal to start in Month II. I want to have a specific goal to start in Month II and I want to have a specific goal to start in Month II.

Month III

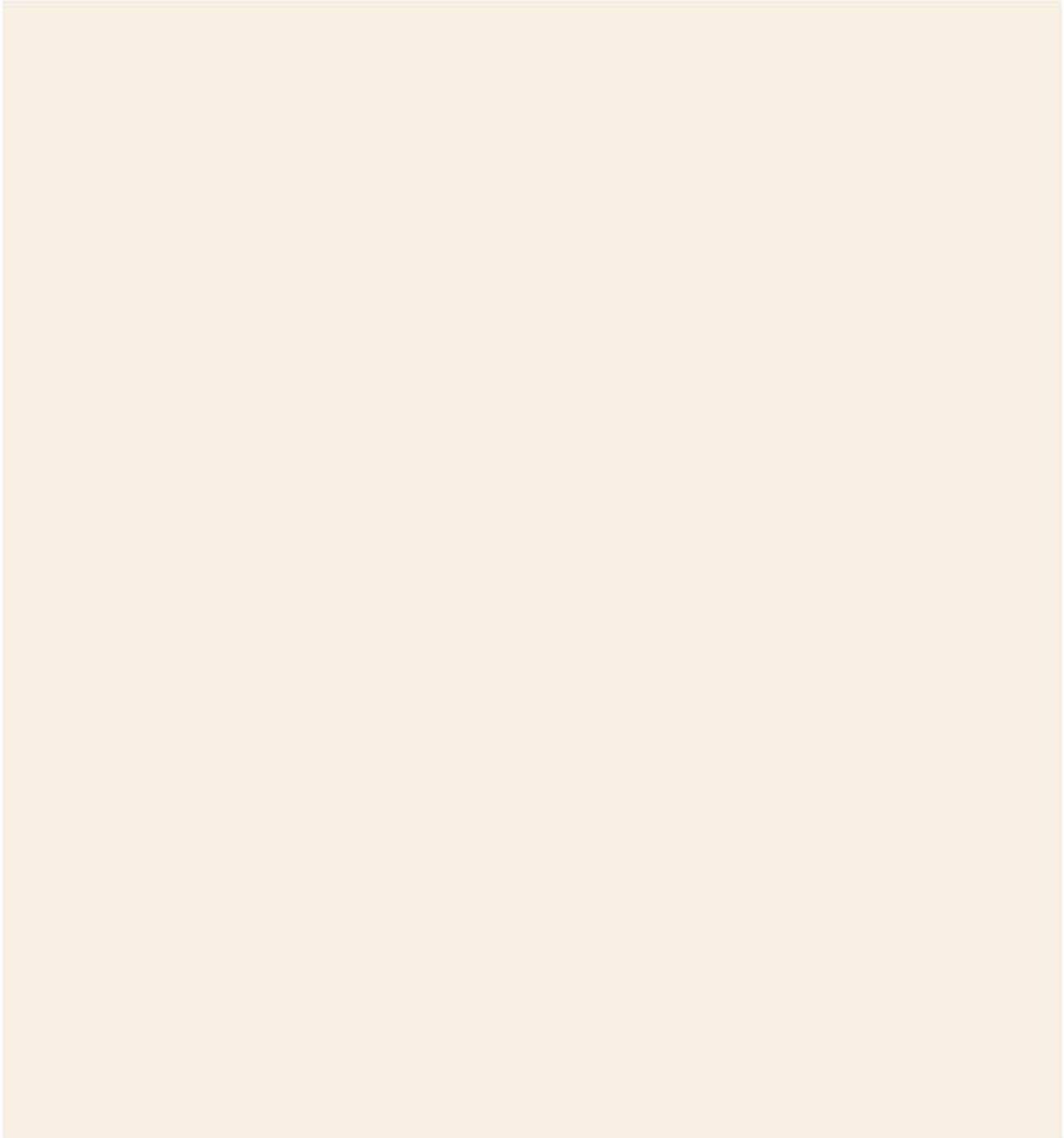
I want to start my business in Month III and I want to have a specific goal to start in Month III. I want to have a specific goal to start in Month III and I want to have a specific goal to start in Month III.

# REFLECTION

What was it like to reflect honestly about your Modern Creative Why this month?

Are you excited, nervous, unsure, already wanting to change your why, worried you will not follow through, energized, curious, motivated?

Whatever you feel is ok! Remember, exploring your Modern Creative Why is going to give you evidence for your ability to follow through and allow you to become the Modern Creative Woman that you always wanted to be. Movement in the opposite direction or no movement at all is no longer an excuse to beat yourself up. The point is to enjoy and move towards what you want.







# INTEGRATION

# Celebrate!

Recognize and celebrate your presence, mindset and purpose this month. Celebration creates motivation for your next level of growth and change. You can celebrate anything you accomplished, a time you remained calm under stress, your self care, a new way of relating to your thoughts, your increased time in the present moment, your creative expressions, your actions in line with your values - anything you do should be celebrated!

1

How I increased my presence  
this month...

2

How I focused on my intentional  
mindset this month...

3

How I explored and lived my  
purpose, values and committed  
actions this month...

4

The celebration I will have this  
month...

(flowers, book on aesthetics, manicure, etc.)

# Fresh Starts

You have completed a month of Fresh Starts! These exercises expanded your mind and opened you to new ways of thinking about your purpose by identifying your Modern Creative Why. Use your creative thoughts to figure out where you want to apply your new thinking over the next four months.

I am delighted you joined this community of Modern Creative Women who are living more compassionately and making the world a better place. Living your values and passions is part of creating a better world. Imagine if everyone focused on living their values...the world would be a happier place indeed!

If you are excited about continuing this work, reach out to The Art Therapy Center of San Francisco for a list of programs, workshops and retreats. For the ultimate creative glow-up, consider a custom-designed VIP package in San Francisco, Paris or online.

It is my pleasure to share the evidence-based information which has helped people all around the world. I look forward to hearing from you about what you learned in this workbook. Please send me a testimonial that I may share with others so they know the benefits of being a Modern Creative Woman.



Amy Backos, PhD, ATR-BC

# RESOURCES

01

Art Therapy Center of San Francisco

Center for creative expression, psychological wellness, positive psychology and value-based living. Email for complementary 20 minute consultation. Amy@amybackos.com

02

Instagram: @dramybackos

Join me each Friday at noon PST while I gently guide you to strategies to live a meaningful and joyful life.

03

Podcast: The Modern Creative Woman

Your go-to resource for the art and science of creativity. Topics coincide with the Modern Creative Woman membership. New episodes drop every Wednesday.

04

Book: ACT Art Therapy

By Dr. Amy Backos

A book about how to live a value-based life using mindfulness, creativity, and connecting to your highest self.







